AMIGA SHOPPER

We've endured a year of nail-biting anxiety for the future of our beloved machine. Now the wait is finally over...

Sue Grant is the Editor of Amiga Shopper. She has worked in publishing for over 12 years and has been at Future Publishing for three years, firstly as Production Editor of Super Play and then as Deputy Editor of Amiga Format.

Dear Subscriber,

A huge sigh of relief and a pat on the back for us all – because we had the sense and loyalty to stick with the best computer in the world for the past year. Our patience has finally paid off and the Amiga now has a brand new owner in the shape of Escom, the German PC manufacturer.

Apparently, Escom plan to manufacture Amigas in China and they also intend to resurrect the Commodore 64 for sale in Eastern Europe and the Far East countries. They are also confident that they can get machines back on the streets in three months, so we shouldn't have much longer to wait! There are many more plans up their sleeves, but they're not committing themselves to anything at the time of writing. However, check out our news pages in the issue for more information, because they go to press much later than this letter and there will have been more developments by then.

The Commodore UK team, in the shape of David Pleasance and Colin Proudfoot and their financial backers, decided to pull out of the bidding process because Escom or Dell had more financial muscle behind them. But, apparently, they intend to talk to Escom about staying involved with the Amiga in some way.

Anyway, it is a time to rejoice that the Amiga is saved.
Long live the Amiga!

Sue Grant

Sue Grant,
Editor.

Subscriptionsdisk

Yes, even with two Coverdisks, you still get your exclusive Subscribers' disk. **Graeme Sandiford** *shows you how to use its contents.*

Eh, it's me again – last time, honest. We've got some interesting programs on this month's disk that should help you to sleep more soundly at night, and enhance, tidy up and even brighten up your Workbench screen. One last thing, please remember that the disk is not bootable.

Diavolo

The world is a dangerous place and, as a result, nothing is totally secure – not even your Amiga. Whether as a result of a freak electrical storm or a clumsy room mate almost everyone is going to lose information from their hard disk sooner or later. The only thing you can do about it is be ready for it when it happens. One of the best ways of making sure you don't lose everything for good is by making regular back-ups.

To help you sleep better at night and save you some dosh, we've included a back-up program on this month's Subscribers' disk. The program is called Diavolo and is relatively easy to use. However, because there is not much in the way of documentation, I don't know too much about the program, including its system requirements. To install it, simply drag any of the libraries that you don't have across to your Libs: drawer.

As the program has no icon, you'll need to show all files in the window before you can run it. Once the program has loaded, simply click on the back-up button to make a back-up of your hard disk, or the restore button to reproduce a backed-up volume.

When backing up, you have a choice of three methods: you can save the back-up on floppies, as a file on a disk, or to any other AmigaDOS volume. The available devices for backing up are listed in the window labelled Mounted Volumes. This includes any floppies, hard disks, RAM disks and CD-ROMs. Select the device to be backed up by double-clicking on its name.

This will take you to the select window where you can select which files are to be included in the back-up. To select a file for inclusion, hold a shift button and click on it. When a file is white, it will be included – if it's black, it will be left out – the same goes for directories in the left window.

Right, now we've selected our files we can start the back-up procedure by pressing the start back-up button. After that, follow the on-screen prompts.

Zed

This next program has absolutely no practical value at all, but I've included it on this month's disk for a good reason – it's extremely cool. What does it do? Put simply, it plays a nice 3D animation on your Amiga's Workbench backdrop – I suppose it could be described as therapeutic (yes a *practical* use).

Installing Zed on your system is a simple process, considering the degree of groovyness that will be added to it. Just extract it by double-clicking on its icon. One you've done that, you need only double-click on the version of the program that you want to use since you don't need to install any libraries or fonts. Although the program can be placed in any directory, if you find the calming effect that the program provides is something you must have all the time, you should copy the program into your WBstartup drawer.

MCP

The Amiga's Operating System may be one of the best, but even this mighty environment can be improved upon and MCP (short for Master Control Program, I don't think it's related to the one from Tron – at least I hope not) is another Workbench-enhancer. So, what can MCP do for you?

The system comes complete with a mouse accelerator, anti-drive-click program, a library and font search utility, screen-blanker, screen-dimmer, mouse pointer blanker, MSDOS-style wildcards (*), a crunch patch, tool aliases, MUI prefs program, tooltype enhancer and a replacement Workbench title that display more info.

Installation is pretty straightforward since the program uses Commodore's Installer utility. However, you will be asked to confirm almost every action the program will make.

Some features of particular note include AssignWedge which enhances the normal "please insert volume" requester. It can also be used to attempt to mount the requested device, or stop the requester from appearing at all.

The program will also keep a record of Gurus in a file stored in your S: directory to aid you in finding out the probable cause of all those nasty crashes. If you're looking to brighten up your desktop, you'll be glad to hear that MCP can use 16-colour mouse pointers, so you can load an IFF brush to replace your mouse pointer.
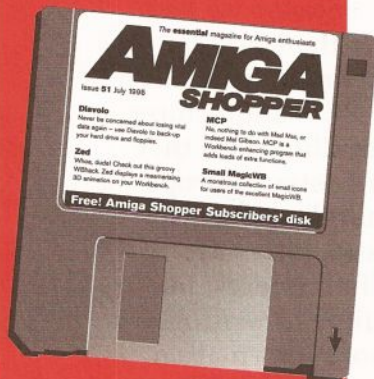
For more info on how the program works and what other functions it can perform, have a look at the documentation. Although this is not a shareware program – the author has asked that you register the program, so please do so.

Small Magic Workbench Icons

There's more to icons than simply making Workbench look a little more interesting by adding lots of little funny shapes. True, they can improve the appearance of your desktop, but they can also help you to identify programs and types of files more easily.

Magic Workbench does a good job of improving the appearance of your Workbench screen. However, the icons that are used with this system are big since they are intended to be used with interlaced screens. These icons have been created for people who don't have multisync monitor, but would still like to use the icons at a reasonable size.

There are icons for a large number of programs, file types and system utilities. To use them, just copy them across to the same directory as the icon you wish to replace. ∎

- *Diavolo*
- *Zed*
- *MCP*
- *Small Magic Workbench Icons*